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SYRACUSE POST-STANDARD
28 July 1979

Domestic Spying Confirmed

The recent release of formerly classified documents secreted away by the Central Intelligence Agency has confirmed the use of intelligence satellites in the late 1960s to spy on American students engaged in anti-war demonstrations.

The documents were obtained under a Freedom of Information Act request by the Center for National Security Studies, a privately financed research organization generally critical of American intelligence activities.

The CIA papers disclosed that the spying on Americans was ordered "at the request of" President Lyndon B. Johnson's White House in an attempt to check "possible foreign connections with the U. S. anti-war movement."

Not only were students spied upon, but the CIA also monitored foreign broadcasts of anti-war activities of actress Jane Fonda and former Attorney General Ramsey Clark. Also, it was the CIA's practice to keep unclassified files, mostly newspaper clippings, on "extremists" such as H. Rap Brown and Eldredge Cleaver, black activists.

James R. Schlesinger, President

Carter's departing energy secretary, was the director of the CIA at the time of the satellite spying on students. The agency's charter then and now forbids it from engaging in domestic intelligence activities.

However, the papers which the Center for National Security Studies has examined clearly indicate such practices were carried out, using equipment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

It has not been determined whether the pictures were used to estimate the size of demonstrations or whether they were enlarged to identify individuals taking part.

The cameras on the American spy satellites, which operate at altitudes higher than 100 miles, are said to be accurate enough to record objects the size of a suitcase.

Although the documents have been released by the CIA, there is no assurance that copies were not made and kept in its files. Nor is there any reason to believe that the photographs which their spy satellites produced for the agency were not duplicated to be retained for whatever purpose.